

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 IO-10 SAM-01 AID-05 AS-01 /085 W

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R 270936Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4593

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL UDORN

CINCPAC

DEPCHJUSMAGTHAI UDORN

CDR USSAG/7TH AF NKP

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE VIENTIANE 4583

BANGKOK ALSO FOR RAMSEY, USAID/LAOS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT PFOR LA

SUBJ: LAO CABINET RECOMMENDS POSTPONEMENT OF ELECTIONS AND
DISCUSSES OTHER SUBJECTS

SUMMARY: LAO CABINET MET JUNE 25 FOR FIRST TIME IN THREE WEEKS.
ACCORDING TO PGNU SPOKESMAN AND OFFICIAL LAO PRESSE, CABINET
DECIDED TO RECOMMEND "POSTPONEMENT" OF GENERAL ELECTIONS
(NEVER SCHEDULED) FOR NEW NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. IT ALSO
DISCUSSED ADMINISTRATIONS FORMED BY PROTESTORS; CURRENCY;
TOURISM; AND AID FROM DRV AND PRC. PGNU SPOKESMAN DISPLAYED
CONSIDERABLE SENSITIVITY OVER FOREIGN MEDIA COVERAGE OF
RECENT EVENTS IN LAOS. END SUMMARY.

1. AT PRESS CONFERENCE JUNE 26, LAO GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN
OUDAY SOUVANNAVONG STATED THAT CABINET MET JUNE 25 UNDER
CHAIRMANSHIP OF PRIME MINISTER SOUVANNA PHOUMA. MEETING
WAS FIRST SINCE JUNE 4. CABINET DISCUSSED FOLLOWING
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SUBJECTS:

2. GENERAL ELECTIONS: IN PRINCIPLE, OUDAY NOTED, ELECTIONS SHOULD BE HELD BY JULY 10 (I.E., WITHIN 90 DAYS OF DISSOLUTION OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE 33 OF CONSTITUTION). HOWEVER, CABINET DECIDED TO SEND LETTER TO ROYAL PALACE RECOMMENDING POSTPONEMENT OF ELECTIONS IN VIEW OF PREVAILING SITUATION. (COMMENT: NO ELECTIONS WERE EVER SCHEDULED, ALTHOUGH THERE WERE INDICATIONS THAT PRIME MINISTER WOULD DEVISE SOME MEANS OF CREATING AN ASSEMBLY WITHIN 90-DAY PERIOD.)

3. NEW ADMINISTRATIONS: ACCORDING TO OFFICIAL LAO PRESSE, NEXT CABINET AGENDA ITEM WAS CONSIDERATION OF "ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEES AND POLITICAL COUNCILS" RECENTLY ESTABLISHED BY PROTESTORS IN SEVERAL PROVINCES. CABINET DECIDED, "IN ACCORDANCE WITH 18-POINT POLITICAL PROGRAM," THAT PGNU ITSELF SHOULD APPOINT PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATORS FROM CIVIL SERVICE, ARMED FORCES, OR POLICE. IN ANY "SPECIAL CASE," PROTESTORS SHOULD SUBMIT PROPOSED NOMINATIONS TO MINISTRY OF INTERIOR WHICH WOULD STUDY THE SUBMISSION AND FORWARD IT TO CABINET FOR DECISION. MEANDWHILE, PGNU WILL ACCEPT PROVISIONALLY ANY ADMINISTRATORS NOMINATED BY PROTEST GROUPS.

4. LPF CURRENCY: OUDAY STATED THAT LAO PATRIOTIC FRONT (LPF) CENTRAL COMMITTEE, "IN ORDER TO AVOID DIFFICULTY," HAS ISSUED STRICT ORDERS THAT LPF CURRENCY SHOULD BE USED ONLY IN "THE LIBERATED ZONE." IN THE "PGNU" (FORMERLY VIENTIANE SIDE) ZONE, ONLY CURRENCY ISSUED BY LAO NATIONAL BANK WILL BE PERMITTED. ASKED WHETHER LPF CURRENCY WILL THUS BE MEDIUM OF EXCHANGE IN SUCH NEWLY LIBERATED CITIES AS PAKSE AND SAVANNAKHET, OUDAY REPLIED THAT THOSE TWO CITIES ARE NOT IN "LIBERATED ZONE" BUT BELONG TO PGNU AND SHOULD USE ONLY PGNU CURRENCY.

5. TOURISM: NOTING THAT "MANY FOREIGN NEWS AGENCIES HAVE GROSSLY DISTORTED THE TRUTH" ABOUT RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN LAOS, OUDAY LAMENTED FACT THAT TOURISM HAS FALLEN OFF BECAUSE PROSPECTIVE TOURISTS ARE "AFRAID." LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HE SAID CABINET HAD THEREFORE DECIDED TO LOOSEN RESTRICTIONS ON MOVEMENT WITHIN THE KINGDOM. WHEN WESTERN JOURNALISTS ASKED IF THIS MEANT THEY COULD NOW VISIT "LIBERATED ZONE," OUDAY HAD TO RETREAT AND SAY SUCH TRIPS WERE NOT POSSIBLE "FOR THE MOMENT" BUT THAT ISSUE WOULD BE DISCUSSED WITH LPF. ASKED WHETHER ONE COULD GO TO HOUET SAI, PAKSE AND SAVANNAKHET, OUDAY GAVE A RATHER HESIT(4W4 FY

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9GH!82QYSH"
H1DG6?*0F*>,"YU(HV+<2.66686E-78!#-F,5_R@YM;BQ
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